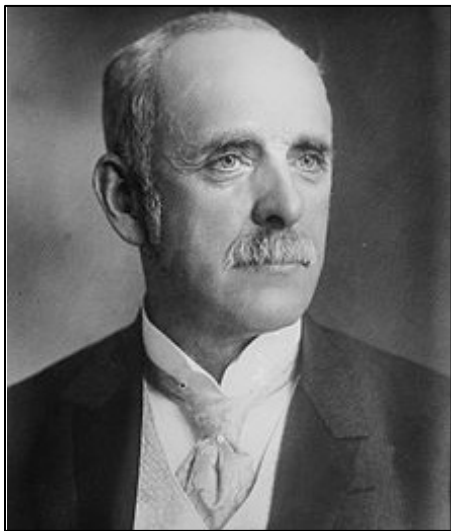


*Pieces of Iowa's Past*, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the Legislative Session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All italicized text/block quotes in this document are taken directly from historical publications with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.



**Governor Leslie Shaw**  
One of the participating officials  
in the 1899 Executive Council

Currently, the Executive Council is made up of the Governor, Treasurer, Auditor, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Agriculture.

In the early days of Iowa's state government, the Executive Council did not include the Secretary of Agriculture. For many decades after the Capitol was completed in 1886, the Executive Council oversaw the contracted maintenance of the Capitol. These concise records, the "Transactions of the Executive Council," or the "Contracts Approved by the Executive Council," explain the contracted work that was done to the property owned by the state. The Executive Council records are in the state archives, but summaries of these records are found in most volumes of the *Iowa Official Register*.

This article examines a few of the projects, contracts, and decisions made by the Executive Council concerning the Capitol and other state properties from 1899 to 1910.

### Transactions of the Executive Council

TRANSACTIONS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.  
—  
FOR THE YEAR 1899.

### **CAPITOL REPAIRS AUTHORIZED.**

March 4th, on application of judges of supreme court, council authorized better facilities in their apartments in the state house, as follows:

- (1) Book shelving for consultation room.
- (2) Better system of plumbing for lavatory.
- (3) Placing of bath tub for use of judges.

August 26th elevators ordered put in good repair so as to make absolutely safe.



**Shelving in the Supreme Court Consultation Room  
in the Iowa State Capitol**

TRANSACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
FOR THE YEAR 1900.

June 27th, contract for constructing ladies' toilet room in basement of Capitol, was awarded to Des Moines Plumbing company at 23.00.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.  
FOR THE YEAR 1901.

January 30, The purchase of a bed-lounge for treasury night watch was authorized.

February 23, custodian authorized to fit up shop rooms for engineer and carpenter in power house, and remove said shops from the capitol.

April 15, contract for shelving in southeast room of State Library awarded to L. Harbach at \$118.00.

June 28, dairy department test room was ordered removed from basement of state house to third story of power house.

November 29, contract for decoration of capitol barber shop awarded to T. I. Stoner at \$150.00.



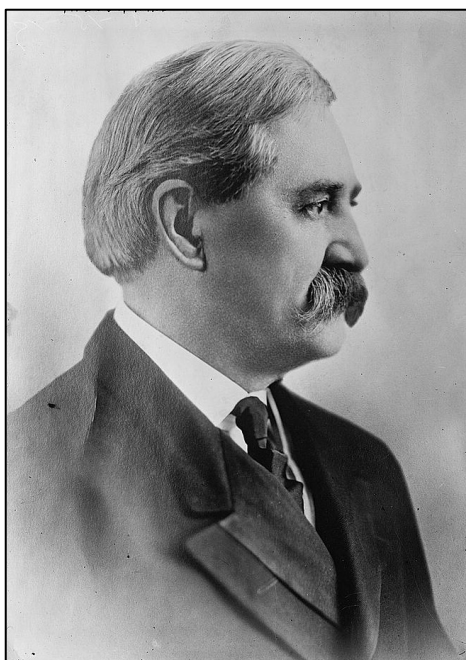
Treasurer's Office in the Iowa State Capitol

**TRANSACTIONS**  
**OF THE**  
**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**FOR THE YEAR 1902.**

**COMPILED BY**

**A. H. DAVISON, Secretary of Executive Council**



**Governor Albert Cummins**

December 5. Council approved the general plan presented by Capitol commission for storage building.



**The storage building along Grand Avenue, directly north of the Capitol**



# TRANSACTIONS

## OF THE

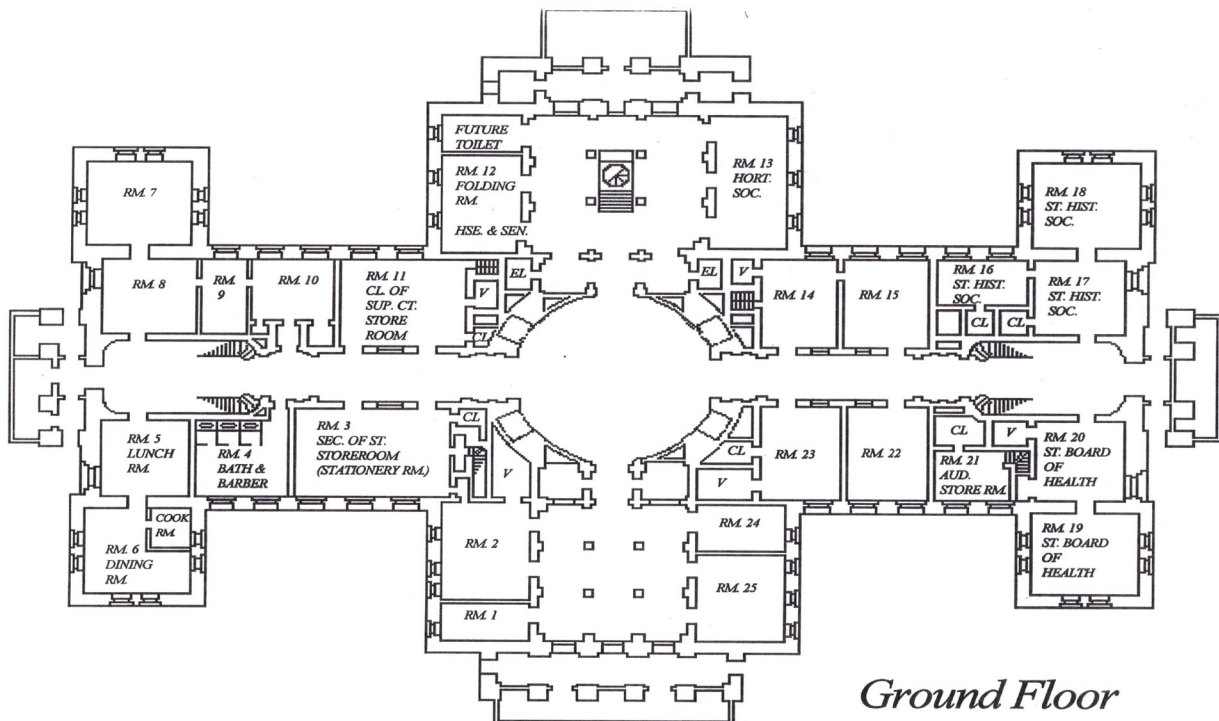
# EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR 1903.

COMPILED BY

A. H. DAVISON, Secretary of Executive Council

November 7. Council made reassignment of Capitol rooms as follows, to wit: To Adjutant General, rooms Nos. 9, 10 and 11 in basement; to Custodian, room 18, first floor; to Horticultural Society, room 19, first floor; to Treasurer of State, room No. 20; to Executive Council, room 17 and adjacent room, first floor, and room 13, basement, for supply department; to Secretary of State, room No. 8, in basement; to Library Commission, rooms 24 and 25, in basement, and that east part of basement room No. 12 be assigned for barber shop.



*Ground Floor*

# TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR 1904

COMPILED BY

A. H. DAVISON, Secretary of Executive Council

January 5. Fire damage in House Chamber, on January 4, was investigated and plans for restoration considered.

March 30. The Custodian was authorized to enclose two rooms in the west wing of the basement to be used as Ice room and for Janitors' room.

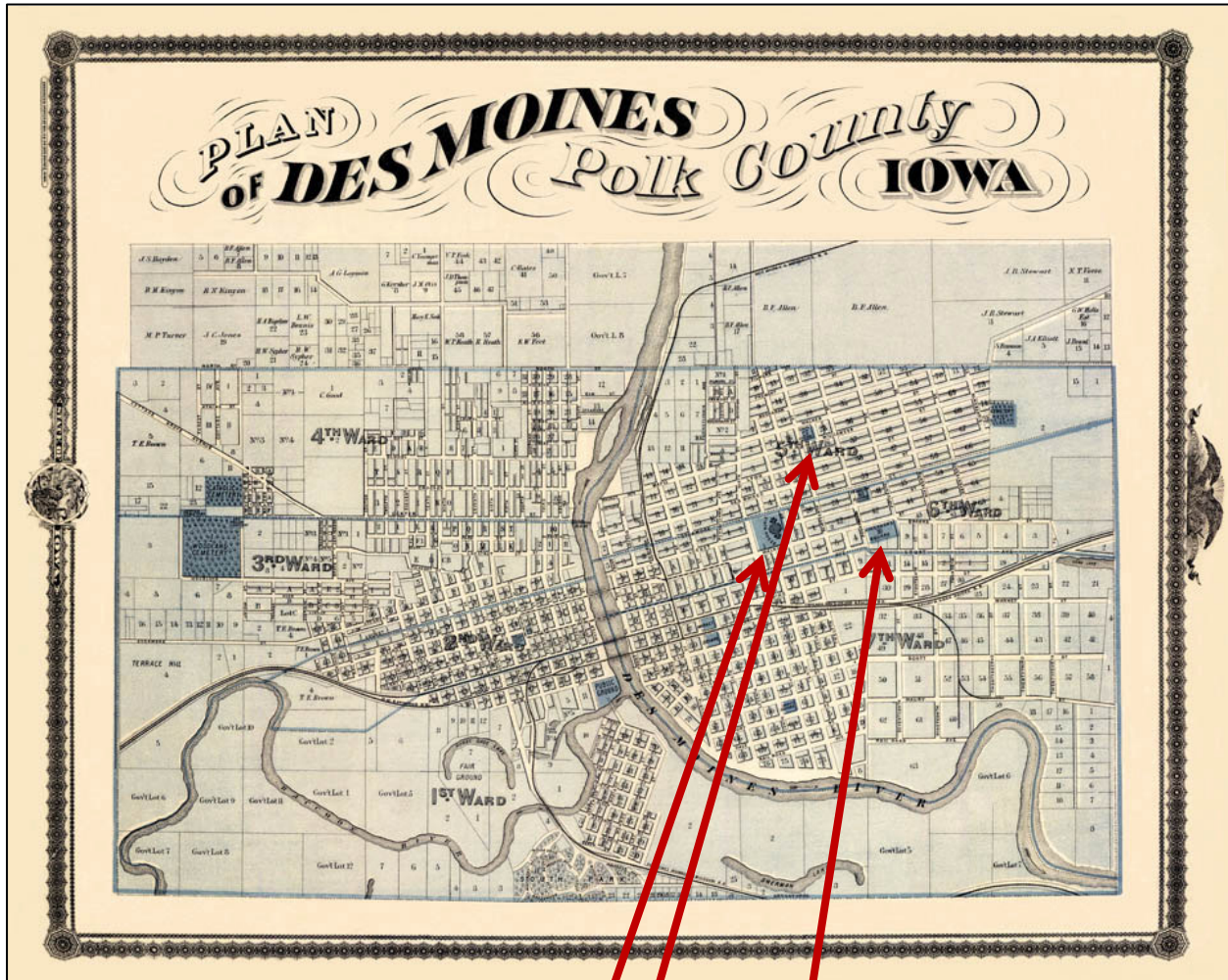
April 29. Preparation for shipment of portraits of the several Governors of Iowa, General Dodge, Senators Allison and Harlan and Curator Aldrich to St. Louis, for exhibition at the World's Fair, was ordered.

May 16. "State Square" was offered to the East Des Moines school board for \$8,500, tender of \$5,000 for property on May 9th having been declined.

May 28. "State Square" was sold to East Des Moines school board for \$8,500, and Governor Cummins requested to execute conveyance as required by law.

### CONTRACTS AWARDED IN 1904.

May 28. To Wellsbach Street Lighting Co , for lighting Capitol Grounds, at \$22.00 per year per light, gas furnished by contracting company.



*This map is from circa 1875*

Capitol Square

State Square

Governor's Square

# TRANSACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1906.

Compiled by A. H. DAVISON, Secretary.

February 14.—Custodian was authorized to put in storage five hundred tons of lump coal, as protection in case of strike by miners.

August 3.—Contract for decorating the rooms of the Railroad Commission, private office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court and offices of the Attorney-General was awarded to T. I. Stoner for the sum of \$3,500.00.



Why Don't You Come to  
**STONER'S**  
For Your Decorating?

The Leading Decorating House  
of the Middle West

It doesn't cost any more and usually less, to employ the services of a house that has earned a reputation for superior work in all branches of Interior Decorating, Wood Finishing, Painting and Frescoing.

Never before in our 24 years' experience have we shown so large and carefully chosen stock of wall coverings. The cream of the output of the art centers of the world is here assembled and Des Moines and Iowa residents are now able to secure decorations not excelled in Chicago or any other American city.

Our salesman are experienced in the art of combining colors and designs and suiting them to the particular requirements of your home and furnishings. We are prepared to interpret your own ideas and will cheerfully co-operate with you in providing original and up-to-date effects that are satisfactory.

Wood Finishing      Frescoing      Free Hand Decorating  
Free Hand Sketches Submitted When Desired

WANTED—First Class Paper Hangers and Painters, none other need apply.

**T. I. STONER**  
810 Walnut Street

August 27.—Long distance telephone granted to the Adjutant-General's department.

September 18.—Secretary of the Executive Council was authorized to ask for bids for purchase of thirty-nine acres of land in the east part of the Fair Grounds.

September 28.—Contract for refinishing woodwork in the rooms of the Clerk of the Supreme Court, Railroad Commissioners and Attorney-General awarded to T. I. Stoner at \$425.25.



October 27.—New contract with Iowa Telephone Company was executed for instruments in the following offices: Superintendent of Public Instruction, Governor, State Treasury, Secretary of State, Railway Commissioners, Mine Inspectors, Auditor of State, State Board of Control, State Board of Health, Adjutant-General, State Land Office, Custodian, Secretary of Executive Council, Clerk of the Supreme Court, Attorney-General, Geological Survey, Historical Building, Agricultural Department, and for extensions for the offices of the Governor, Attorney-General, Executive Council, Custodian, Railway Commissioners, Board of Control, Auditor of State, Secretary of State, and Treasurer of State at \$2.00 per month for telephones and seventy-five cents per month for extensions: contract to cover all future additions.

### REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR THE CALENDAR YEARS 1907 AND 1908

June 15, 1907—Contract awarded to Joe Kirscher & Company for granite steps at east entrance to the capitol at \$5,545. Contract awarded for granite curbing and approach to the historical building to the Georgia Rough and Cut Stone Company at \$2,732.97. Contract awarded to the Des Moines Cabinet Company for wood finish in historical building at \$778. Contract awarded to T. I. Stoner for painting and decorating in Historical building at \$1,263.



September 16, 1907—Governor Cummins reported that Miss Nellie V. Walker accepted the Council's proposition to enter into contract upon competitive basis to design figure for statue of the late Senator Harlan, she to receive \$500, and if successful in competition, \$4,000 for completion of said statue and placing the same in the Hall of Fame at Washington, D. C. Custodian T. E. McCurdy filed report of cost of construction of new sidewalk, etc., about capitol square and upon grounds, showing total expenditure of \$3,166.04, of which \$2,706.04 was on account of sidewalks, indicating a saving to the state of approximately Twelve Hundred Dollars under the lowest and best bid obtained.

Left: Statue of Senator James Harlan



Nellie V. Walker

September 28, 1907—Custodian McCurdy was directed to get estimates of cost of removing the glass floor under the dome, first story of the Capitol Building, and placing a suitable rail about the opening and to call upon State Architect H. F. Liebke for his opinion in writing as to whether the removal of said floor would in any way weaken the building.

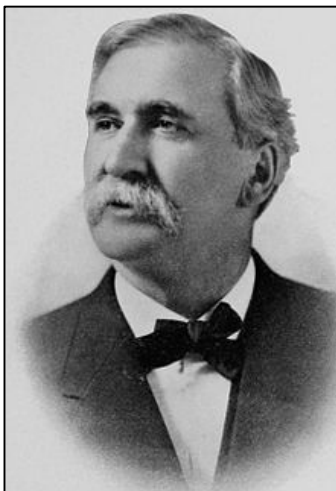
November 15, 1907—Contract awarded to the Flower City Ornamental Iron Works for construction of stairway between the first floor and basement in the east wing of the Capitol building, at \$1,000.00.



**Iron stairway on the ground floor of the Iowa State Capitol**

#### **TRANSACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

CONDENSED REPORT BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE CALENDAR YEARS  
1909 AND 1910.



**Governor Warren Garst**



April 15, 1909—Adjutant General Logan presented to the council abstracts of title and warranty deed conveying 78½ acres of land to be used for camp purposes of the Iowa National Guard, which purchase was approved by the executive council and voucher authorized in the amount of \$9,812.50 in payment therefor.

Secretary of the council was directed to prepare proposals for the necessary supplies, paper, etc., for the several state departments for the ensuing biennial period, preparatory to making contracts.

June 29, 1909—

Contract was awarded Charles Weitz Sons of Des Moines, Iowa, for the erection of an addition to the paper storage building at \$2,549.00.

October 9, 1909—Contract was executed with the Flour City Ornamental Iron Works of Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the metal work in finishing the rotunda of the Historical Building, in the amount of \$5,490.00



**Rotunda in the Historical Building, now  
the Ola Babcock Miller Building**

Custodian Boutin was instructed to deliver to the Archives Department the records of the Capitol Commission for classification and arrangement in the Archives Department.



Below and on the next page: This list of Executive Council responsibilities is from the 1909-1910 Iowa Official Register.

Governor Beryl Carroll

### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*Member's Compensation, \$600 per annum.*

BERYL F. CARROLL.....Governor  
WILLIAM C. HAYWARD.....Secretary of State  
JOHN L. BLEAKLY.....Auditor of State  
WILLISON W. MORROW.....Treasurer of State

Office	Name	Legal Residence	Birthplace	Compensation
Secretary .....	Arthur H. Davison...	Des Moines....	Pa. ....	\$ 1,800
Asst. secretary.....	Almer U. Swan.....	Carlisle .....	Iowa .....	1,600
Clerk .....	Henry A. Nichols.....	Des Moines....	Iowa .....	1,000
Expert accountant.....	Chas. C. Heer.....	Armstrong .....	New Jersey	\$6 pr d
Postmaster and carrier.....	John Heffelfinger.....	Grundy Center	Pa. ....	1,400
Janitor and messenger.....	.....	.....	.....	480

Among the duties placed upon the executive council, by the laws of Iowa, are the following:

To audit all claims for expenses and per diem of state officers and employees and of claims for stores, supplies, furniture, etc., purchased for state departments, and sundry other claims.

To purchase all stores, supplies and furniture for state departments and officers, including the state printer.

The execution of contracts for fuel, lights, repairs, blank books, etc.

The approval of articles of incorporation and by-laws of building and loan associations, and of plans for liquidation of said associations.

The custody of paper and supplies for state printer and other state officers.

The assessment of railway, express, sleeping and equipment car, telegraph and telephone properties.



- The classification of railways.
- The making of tax levies for state purposes and the certification of the same to the several county auditors.
- The certification of tax valuations, fixed by the executive council, to the several county auditors.
- The equalization of property valuations between counties.
- The canvass of votes cast for state and district officers.
- The compilation of a state census once in ten years (next 1915).
- The making of contracts for publication of supreme court reports.
- The declaration of changes in classification of cities.
- The compilation and publication of annual reports of (a) railway, express, sleeping and equipment car assessments, (b) telegraph and telephone assessments and (c) of the biennial report of expenses of all state departments.
- The consideration of petitions for drainage of lake beds; the survey and platting of the same and the sale of the land within said lake beds when drainage is authorized.
- The determination of the territory outside of Iowa in which Iowa life insurance companies may loan money.
- The making of annual settlement with all state officers, under section 161-a of the supplement to the code, 1907.
- The assignment of office rooms to state officers in capitol building.
- The appointment of the board of examiners of mine inspectors.
- The approval of bonds and of rates of interest to be paid by depositories on state funds.
- The fixing of reserve lists of state documents and publications and the approval of requisitions for documents and publications in said reserve list.
- To dispose of state documents which the state librarian, curator of historical department and curator of law department may certify are not required for state uses.
- To approve rules for uniformity of assessments in counties.
- To audit claims for the expenses of collection of inheritance taxes and for the repayment of such taxes when wrongfully paid.
- The approval of plans of doing business by certain investment companies.
- The fixing of editions of leaflets published by state superintendent of public instruction, of the report of the proceedings of the State Teachers' Association, and of the editions of certain reports which are not fixed by statute.
- The approval of plans for buildings at the state educational institutions, under certain conditions.
- To determine the value at which property may be taken by Iowa incorporations and the amount of stock which may be issued on account thereof.

### Current Responsibilities of the Executive Council

The [Executive Council website](#) includes the current responsibilities of the Executive Council:

The Executive Council was created by the adoption of the Code of 1860. Among the duties placed upon the Executive Council by the Code of Iowa are

the following responsibilities, which in some instances are limited to specific situations or cases: approve real estate transactions, approve leases of public land, authorize condemnation proceedings, authorize and pay special assessments, appoint legal counsel and special counsel, authorize and pay court costs and litigation expenses, settle or compromise legal claims, approve bank depositories, provide anticipatory and emergency funding, administer trust funds, act as the governing body for state employee insurance and benefit plans, and canvass votes cast and required to be filed with the State Commissioner of Elections.